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SIPDIS

ISN/NESS FOR J. MENTZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/18
TAGS: ENRG IT KNNP TPHY TRGY

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT ITALY'S
CASACCIA RESEARCH FACILITY AND THE TAPIRO RESEARCH REACTOR
DELIVERED

REF: A) 12/5/08 KRUPA-PRESTON E-MAIL B) SECSTATE 124561

Classified By: ECONOMIC MINISTER COUNSELOR TOM DELARE
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (U) This cable is classified Confidential (Releasable to Italy) for transmission purposes. Per Ref B, Post declassified and marked the recommendations as "SENSITIVE PHYSICAL SECURITY INFORMATION" prior to handing them over to appropriate personnel in the Italian government.

¶2. (SBU) Summary. Italian officials welcomed the USG's recommendations for improvements at Italy's Casaccia research facility and TAPIRO research reactor. They said they would seek to insert the issue into senior-level policy planning, and noted that the recommendations come at a useful moment, as the government considers what measures it must take to pave the way for a return to nuclear power in Italy. End summary.

¶3. (SBU) On November 25, SCICouns delivered Ref B recommendations to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Counselor for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Emanuele Farruggia, who chaired the interagency team's meetings at the MFA on October 14 and October 16, 2008. Counselor Farruggia said he would distribute the recommendations as appropriate among interested Government of Italy (GOI) entities, taking care to do so in a way that restricts access to those with a need to know. (He noted that he had circulated his report of the team's visit previously in such a way.) Farruggia also said he would ask for points of contact at key agencies to be named, and will suggest that they contact Post with any questions/feedback. He added that he would stress the need for a reply (through Post) in a reasonable period of time, and would mention that the USG team would like to return to TAPIRO in 2009, once improvements have been made.

¶4. (SBU) Farruggia said that he plans to raise the Casaccia/TAPIRO issue with a military advisor in the office of the Prime Minister (PM), to give it some added visibility. If possible, he would like to raise it himself in a political meeting at the PM's office, he said, but he did not know yet if that would be feasible. Per reftel, SCICouns mentioned to him that the USG is still interested in pursuing fuel repatriation, and noted that the USG is continuing to urge the GOI's Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA) to provide fuel characterization data so that both the USG and ENEA have a clear idea of how long it may be possible to operate the reactor before the fuel would be too irradiated for the U.S. Department of Energy's Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) program to facilitate its

return to the U.S.

¶15. (C) Counselor Farruggia raised one specific question, regarding the recommendation to install vehicle barriers effective against the Italian Design Basis Threat for the reactor vehicle entrance. On December 12, Post passed Ref A response to his question to Counselor Farruggia. Post also passed Refs A and B to MFA Economic Affairs Director for Space, Technology, Defense, Nuclear and Non-Proliferation Issues Counselor Roberto Liotto on December 12. Liotto confirmed that Farruggia would have the lead on the Casaccia/TAPIRO issue, but welcomed the information, since Liotto is responsible for related issues such as Italy's ratification of the 2005 amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

¶16. (SBU) On November 26, Mr. Davide Urso of GOI-owned nuclear site management company SOGIN told SCICouns that the GOI's Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) plans to use the USG recommendations to urge the Economic Development Ministry to instruct ENEA to upgrade the physical security at Casaccia, and to urge the Ministry to provide funding for that. ENEA will participate by providing baseline descriptions of the existing security arrangements, but the recommendation will come from ISPRA. ISPRA's nuclear department is due to become the core of a new GOI Nuclear Security Agency, which Farruggia thought would help to spur security improvements at Casaccia. However, Urso said the new agency will not likely be created until March 2009 at the earliest, given the current legislative calendar. Both he and Farruggia said the USG recommendations are coming at a useful moment.

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